

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the abstract at page 14 with the following amended abstract:

A method and a system for ~~data type preserving~~ encryption of a data element in a relational database, wherein each data element ~~comprises~~ includes a string of at least one character. The method ~~comprises~~ includes the steps of: reading the type of a data element which is to be encrypted; ~~and interpreting said the data type in order~~ to form a restricting character set for each character of ~~said the~~ data element. ~~Then encryption using said encryption means for, and~~ encrypting each character of ~~said the~~ data element into an encrypted character ~~using said restricted character set to control said encryption means to only create encrypted characters included said restricting character set is performed~~ selected from the restricting character set.